

WSDOT Ferries Division Assistant Secretary David Moseley's Weekly Update April 4, 2008

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Beginning of Spring Schedule

Sunday, March 31, marked the beginning of the spring schedule for the ferry system. We opened the Anacortes-Sidney B.C. route with help from more than 100 friends from the communities and cities of Anacortes and Sidney.

Visiting with Ferry Served Communities

As of week five, I've had the pleasure of visiting all but one of the ferry served communities (Sidney, B.C.) - and riding all but two of the routes. Last week, I shared with you some of the common themes heard at the FAC meetings – improving transit connections, more advanced notice of service changes, congestion on local roadways and establishing a much needed funding source for the ferry system. We wrapped up the series of eight meetings this week by visiting the communities of Bremerton, Anacortes, San Juan Islands, and Vashon (I was sorry to have personally missed the San Juan Islands FAC meeting, but I did have the good fortune of briefing the San Juan County Council a few weeks back.). I also had the opportunity to build upon my discussion with the Port Townsend-Keystone Partnership Group and FAC last week, through my visit with the Port Townsend Chamber this week.

My staff is hard at work summarizing what we heard at these meetings, and I anticipate the meeting summaries will be available online by the end of next week. Also, I am meeting with my staff to review the public input, and see if we can translate it into action to start addressing some of the valuable comments right away. These meetings were especially helpful in providing us with a grounding on the issues in the communities we serve.

New Vessel Procurement for the Port Townsend / Keystone Route

On Thursday, March 27 one bid was received to construct a 50-car vessel based on the "Steilacoom II" design to be used on the Port Townsend-Keystone Route. The state engineer's estimate for this vessel, prepared by an outside consultant and reviewed and approved by Ferries Division staff, was for \$16.8 million. The sole bid of \$25.9 million was received from Todd Pacific Shipyard - 53% over the engineer's estimate. We immediately began a thorough bid analysis. A bid verification and review meeting was held on March 31 between Todd and the ferry system.

In order to achieve an acceptable bid, I will be having conversations with all the shipyards over the next few days to explore potential avenues to reduce the cost and to achieve additional bidders. In addition, we will repackage the bid to incorporate lessons

learned that could result in a lower bid – and re-estimate it. My goal is to re-advertise the bid in the next few weeks with the potential of awarding a more acceptable bid in early May. I am confident that we are on our way to building new boats!

My Calendar

To give you an idea of where to find me next week:

- Presenting to the Legislature’s Joint Transportation Committee Ferry Policy Group – Tuesday, April 8
- On TVW, interviewing with David Ammons on “Inside Olympia” – Wednesday, April 9
- Meeting with the “Oatmeal Breakfast Club” on Bainbridge Island – Thursday, April 10